

1. In reference to Exhibit 14, 1A_1B: The Government has listed hours for a Systems Integration Engineer in Cost Chart Exhibit 1A_1B. Would the Government please provide the labor category description for this position?

A: Exhibit 1A erroneously included a systems integration engineer. The disconnect between Exhibit 1A's labor categories and the position description table have been corrected.

2. In reference to SOW Section 1.5: As we assist in compiling solicitations, what information is furnished by NASA, and what must be created or furnished by the contractor? For example, is it a contractor's responsibility to develop proposal instructions, cover letter, evaluation criteria, etc.?

A: NASA program officers develop requirements and technical content and make all inherently-government decisions. Responsibility for solicitation content development and explicit proposal instructions, selection/rejection letter contents, and evaluation criteria creation reside with government personnel. The contractor's work activities facilitate government decision-making by supporting sub-processes of the solicitation, proposal evaluation, and selection life-cycle. For example, contractor personnel compile and post to NSPIRES final solicitation documents, program-specific data requirements, and proposal instructions that accompany solicitations; provide technical editing services (e.g., to assure document clarity and internal consistency); present and maintain solicitations and instructions in publicly-accessible ways; and maintain version control of documents, evaluation criteria, proposal evaluations, and artifacts related to the solicitation, evaluation, and selection life-cycle. Under the direction of government personnel the contractor communicates with and exchanges information with reviewers, panelists, and proposers.

3. In reference to SOW Section 1.1: How many of these workshops and pre-solicitation meetings are typically required for a solicitation?

A: Science planning workshops and pre-solicitation meetings are optional features of the overall solicitation and peer-review life-cycle. They are not meaningful metrics within the larger context of the NRESS IDIQ contract. Not all solicitations derive from a formal pre-solicitation workshop. Occasionally a task supports a science planning workshop exclusively, with no follow-on solicitation deriving directly from the workshop. Pre-solicitation planning meetings that occur vary in scale, schedule, and number of participants; these factors all influence the extent of the government's requirements on each particular IDIQ task.

4. In reference to Attachment H –Government Furnished Property: This list does not appear to include audio-visual equipment. Will NASA provide necessary A/V equipment necessary for meetings, or must the contractor furnish it?

A: The contractor furnishes necessary A/V hardware when A/V services are required to support an NRESS event. An exception to this general requirement is when an event is held at a NASA-controlled facility, such as a NASA center, in which case an on-site service contractor typically provides A/V hardware.

5. In reference to Attachment I –Information Technology (IT) Security Applicable Documents List: Can NASA make this information available in a Bidder’s Library?

A: Uncontrolled versions of these documents will not be posted to the e-library. All controlled versions of the documents itemized on Attachment I, *Information Technology Security Applicable Documents List*, are accessible at the following URL: http://nodis3.gsfc.nasa.gov/main_lib.cfm.

6. Can NASA provide diagrams of the technology architecture and development environment?

A: The NSPIRES system diagram will be made available in the bidders’ e-library. The system hardware and system components are itemized in Attachment H, *Government Furnished Property*.

7. Can NASA provide detailed information on the current capabilities of NSPIRES, including what tasks can be automated, what reports are generated, what databases it connects to, etc.?

A: NSPIRES overview information is available by visiting the NSPIRES site here: <https://nspires.nasaprs.com/external/>. A user account is not needed to visit or navigate the site. Within the site is extensive information about NSPIRES objectives, functionality, features, and its Oracle-based technology. The site contains FAQs, self-guided tutorials, user guides and other reference materials.

8. In reference to SOW Section 3.9 *“Create, manage, operate, and maintain a web-based capability to make proposal review packages available to panelists, panel teams during panel events, and/or to external reviewers. The capability shall provide for reviewers’ electronic responses. Maintain electronic records of the review history of each proposal consistent with NASA records management policy (e.g. which proposals were sent to whom, which reviews were submitted, and which requests for reviews were declined or ignored).”* Are these current capabilities of NSPIRES?

A: Yes, the current production version of NSPIRES fulfills or enables the minimum functional requirements described in this SOW element.

9. In reference to SOW Section 1.7, “Post solicitations to the searchable information technology system on solicitations’ release dates’ and SOW Section 4.5, “Produce and issue electronically participation requests to panelists and reviewers, and under NASA’s direction, develop electronic review instructions and evaluation forms that are consistent with the evaluation criteria in the Program Announcement”: What communications, if any (e.g., FBO announcements, grants.gov listings, participation requests, evaluation forms, etc.), can be automated by NSPIRES, or must these be completed manually?

A: NSPIRES is a database system designed to fulfill the government’s requirement for solicitation and peer-review life-cycle text and document management and control. It fulfills some document workflow management requirements but it is not built on a market-based COTS collaboration platform, such as SharePoint, nor does it possess all the features of such a system. NSPIRES is used to map reviewers and panelists to solicitations and to map proposals to reviewers. NSPIRES documents and tracks reviewer progress in relation to assigned proposal review assignments, but the contractor’s personnel also communicate extensively with reviewers, panelists, and the research community via e-mail.

10. SOW Section 2.4: Can NSPIRES automatically generate the NOI Summary Report, or must this be compiled manually?

A: Yes, NSPIRES supports this functionality in response to program-officer request.

11. SOW Section 3.11: Can NSPIRES generate panel finding reports in the “prescribed formats” or must these reports be created manually?

A: Yes, NSPIRES supports this functionality in part; detailed or non-standard requests are supplemented via negotiation between program officers and the NRESS contractor team.

12. SOW Section 3.17 and 3.18: Can NSPIRES generate PI packages and/or TR packages, or must these packages be created manually?

A: Yes, NSPIRES supports this functionality. The functionality is supplemented via communications between awards office personnel and program office personnel, as facilitated by the NRESS contractor team.

13. SOW Section 3.20: Does NSPIRES currently serve as the “electronic peer review management system”?

A: Yes, NSPIRES is the electronic system that currently fulfills this SOW element.

14. SOW Section 4.14: Does NSPIRES have survey capabilities to meet the requirements of SOW 4.14, or is a different tool required?

A: NSPIRES does not support this SOW element. *Cvent*, a commercially-available application, is currently used to fulfill this SOW element.

15. In reference to SOW Section 5.13: Can NSPIRES generate the report for the Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, or must this report be created manually?

A: NSPIRES data is the source for this report, which the government requires infrequently. When the government requires this report, the NRESS contractor personnel extract NSPIRES data, analyze and present the information to fulfill the requirement.

16. In reference to Exhibit 7: Please provide a comprehensive list of applicable ODCs and current annual expenditures by category. Will NASA consider providing plug numbers for the ODCs?

A: The exhibits will be revised. Please see Final RFP once released.

17. In reference to Exhibit 7: Will NASA consider providing a plug number for travel?

A: The exhibits will be revised. Please see Final RFP once released.

18. In order to properly price this requirement, as part of our off-site facilities cost, the offerors will need to know NSPIRES system requirements, (i.e., network requirements, disk space, I/O speeds, etc.). Will the government please provide these requirements?

A: NSPIRES is a government-owned/contractor-operated product, a “*system-as-a-service*” operated in response to functionality governed by the NRESS contract’s SOW and in task plan requests. The government specifies few technical requirements other than the explicit technical requirements listed in the NRESS SOW, e.g., provide 98% availability at all times. More general requirements governing information technology security and information technology management are specified in NASA’s online directive library, which can be found here: http://nodis3.gsfc.nasa.gov/main_lib.cfm. The successful offeror will expand or adjust system capabilities, such as memory arrays and disk storage, in response to functional user demand.

19. In reference to Exhibit 17, Representative Task Order Number Three –Deliverables Table, Number 4, Performance Standard: Would NASA provide a sample of a SWAT format or might the instruction had meant a SWOT format, in which case no explanation is required?

A: The exhibit erroneously specified a deliverable in “SWAT” format. The exhibit has been corrected to specify the deliverable in strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) format.

20. Does NASA intend to populate the e-Library site (<https://foiaelibrary.gsfc.nasa.gov>) with relevant program and technical material or will a reading room be established to include copies of the current contract, modifications and task orders as well as any other relevant material so bidders can accurately gauge the level of support required. Examples of information required include:

All NSPIRES architecture documents, design documents, technical and user manuals, trade studies or material related to the NSPIRES system.

All customer satisfaction survey data collected at the end of each task. We understand that stakeholders are surveyed electronically at the end of reviews or other activities.

All task orders including statements of work, task values and modifications issued under the existing contract.

A: The availability of the items requested is indicated in the following table:

Item Requested	Availability Status
Current Contract	Please visit the NRESS bidders’ e-library to obtain a copy of the current NRESS contract
Modifications	One must submit a FOIA Request to obtain these documents
Task Orders, i.e., Task Plans	All releasable information will be provided in the NRESS bidders’ e-library
NSPIRES architecture documents	Particulars of the NSPIRES system, such as configuration items, test plan protocols, and systems operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period
Design documents	Particulars of the NSPIRES system, such as design documents,

	configuration items, test plan protocols, and systems operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period
Technical Manuals	Particulars of the NSPIRES system, such as design documents, configuration items, test plan protocols, and systems operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period
User Manuals	NSPIRES user guides and computer-based tutorials are available at the NSPIRES web-site are located here: https://nspires.nasaprs.com/external/ .
Trade Studies	No trade studies exist of the NSPIRES system
Customer satisfaction survey data	Customer satisfaction surveys are solicited solely to inform the government about the incumbent's past performance and to inform performance planning; the government will not disclose historical customer satisfaction data during the current NRESS competition
<Historical> SOW	All releasable information will be provided in the NRESS bidders' e-library
Task Order Values	One must submit a FOIA request to obtain this document
SDLC documentation:	
Requirements documents	Particulars of the NSPIRES system, such as design documents, configuration items, test plan protocols, and systems operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period
Design documents	Particulars of the NSPIRES system, such as design documents, configuration items, test plan protocols, and systems operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period
Diagrams for logical and physical architecture	Please visit the NSPIRES bidders' e-library to obtain a copy of the NSPIRES system diagram
Data dictionaries	Glossaries and definitions of NSPIRES reference terms are available at the NSPIRES web-site located here: https://nspires.nasaprs.com/external/ .
User and operation guides	NSPIRES user guides and computer based tutorials are available at the NSPIRES web-site located here: https://nspires.nasaprs.com/external/ .
Test plans and procedures	Particulars of the NSPIRES system, such as design documents, configuration items, test plan protocols, and systems operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period
Configuration management items	Particulars of the NSPIRES system, such as design documents, configuration items, test plan protocols, and system operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period

21. In attachment G, Government Furnished Information, there are lists and links of documents. Will those be provided to the bidders prior to Award and/or before the solicitation comes out?

A: A variety of artifacts that illustrate features of the peer-review process will be provided in the bidder's e-library. The NSPIRES web page contains considerable information that offerors will find helpful, and other technical documentation related to the NSPIRES system, such as design documents, configuration items, test plan protocols, and systems operations documents will be provided to the successor during the transition period. Refer to the table presented in response to question #20 for additional information.

22. In reference to Clause H.9 Limitation on Future Contracting: Would the Government add the following section (3) to the OCI language to section (c);

“(3) The Contractor and its subcontractors and consultants shall be ineligible to perform in any capacity on any work arising from, or related to, any program on which it performed any functions of the NASA peer review process. “

A: Clause H.9, Limitation on Future Contracting will remain unchanged.

23. In addition to the list of hardware provided as GFE in Attachment H, could NASA clarify if any software for NSPIRES Operations and Maintenance or Enhancement development is also provided as GFE? For example, integrated development environment (IDE) software (NetBeans, JDeveloper, Eclipse, etc.) and associate software for SDLC functions such as testing suites, source code libraries, configuration/change management software, bug tracking software, etc. ?

A: The following products are currently being used as part of the software development life cycle (SDLC): *CaliberRM* is a requirements management tool; Toad is used for Oracle database development; and Scriptlogic supports Help Desk service request management.

24. With respect to the GFE hardware listed in Attachment H, please clarify if the hardware supports only the production system or also accommodates a separate development environment and separate test environment. Additionally, is this GFE hardware also inclusive of a disaster recovery/backup site?

A: Items itemized on the hardware list in Attachment H, *Government Furnished Property*, exist at the NSPIRES production and test environment maintained at a commercial data center in Reston, Virginia or at development environment in Crystal City, Virginia. No other physical system environments exist. There is no separate disaster recovery or back-up site.

25. Would NASA provide a list of all software and versions used to support the NSPIRES system?

A: See previous answer at question #20.

26. Does the current hosting provider currently meet the SLA metrics specified in Attachment A, SOW Requirement 7.16 and will the Government please provide a copy of the metrics for the previous 12 months?

A: See previous answer at question #20.

27. Please provide details that illustrate and describe which components of NSPIRES are COTS products (software name and version) and which functions are custom developed. Also please provide details on interfaces to grants.gov and any other external interfaces as to data exchange specifications.

A: NSPIRES functionality is based on contractor-developed and maintained JAVA code. All other software applications that NSPIRES uses are COTS-based. See previous answer at question #20.

28. Will the Government please identify any help desk software currently utilized and if it will also be provided as GFE?

A: The contractor uses *ScriptLogic* to support Help Desk operations. The contractor is required to provide the help desk software. *ScriptLogic* applications are commercially-available for use by the incumbent's successor if the successor chooses to use a product from the *ScriptLogic* family.

29. Will the Government please provide metrics associated with the support of the NSPIRES user community? Specifically: How many help desk tickets are opened on average each month? What is the response time for resolution? What is the current staff level dedicated to support help desk functions?

A: During the period August 2010 through October 2013, inclusive, the contractor processed approximately 800 service requests each month. All service requests customarily receive same-day acknowledgement but close-out times vary based on the nature of the request. The number of Help Desk staff employed by the incumbent is proprietary to the incumbent's management approach and will not be provided.

30. Would NASA provide additional SDLC documentation with respect to the NSPIRES system, including the minimum documentation required by the contractor specified in Attachment A, SOW requirement 7.15 (Requirements documents, design documents and diagrams for logical and physical architectures, data dictionaries, user and operations guides, test plans and procedures, configuration management items etc.)?

A: See previous answer at question #20.

31. What language is NSPIRES written in?

A: NSPIRES is written in JAVA language. See previous answer at question #20.

32. What database system does NSPIRES use?

A: NSPIRES uses Oracle. See previous answer at question #20.

33. In order to better understand the nature of the NRESS work and as an aid in crafting our Management Approach and developing our Cost Proposal, will the government post current NRESS Task Orders in the NRESS E-Library?

A: See previous answer at question #20.

34. Since NRESS is more than an administrative contract (including IT, Education and Outreach), would it be possible to compete it under NAICS 541519 or even at a under \$14M level? Therefore, we request NASA to consider changing the NAICS code to 541611 or 541519.

A: An analysis of this requirement was completed and it was determined that 561110 was the appropriate NAICS Code for this requirement. The NAICS code currently assigned has been accepted by the Small Business Administration for the NRESS 8(a) competitive solicitation. The NAICS code will remain 561110.

35. Because of the volume of PPQs, some of our contracting officers have asked us to use CPARS in lieu of PPQs. Will NASA accept CPARS in lieu PPQs?

A: The Offeror and any proposed significant subcontractor(s) [as defined in the RFP] shall provide the questionnaires provided in Exhibit 13 to establish a record of past performance. The Offeror shall instruct each of its references to return the questionnaire directly to the Government in a sealed envelope. CPARS will not be accepted.

36. Does the “minimum average annual cost/fee of \$1M” represent each contract or all contracts in aggregate within an offeror’s past performance response?

A: Each contract will be required to meet the minimum average annual cost/fee of \$1M.